

T H E  
A N G E L and C U R A T E.

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N A T H A N I E L W E E K E S.

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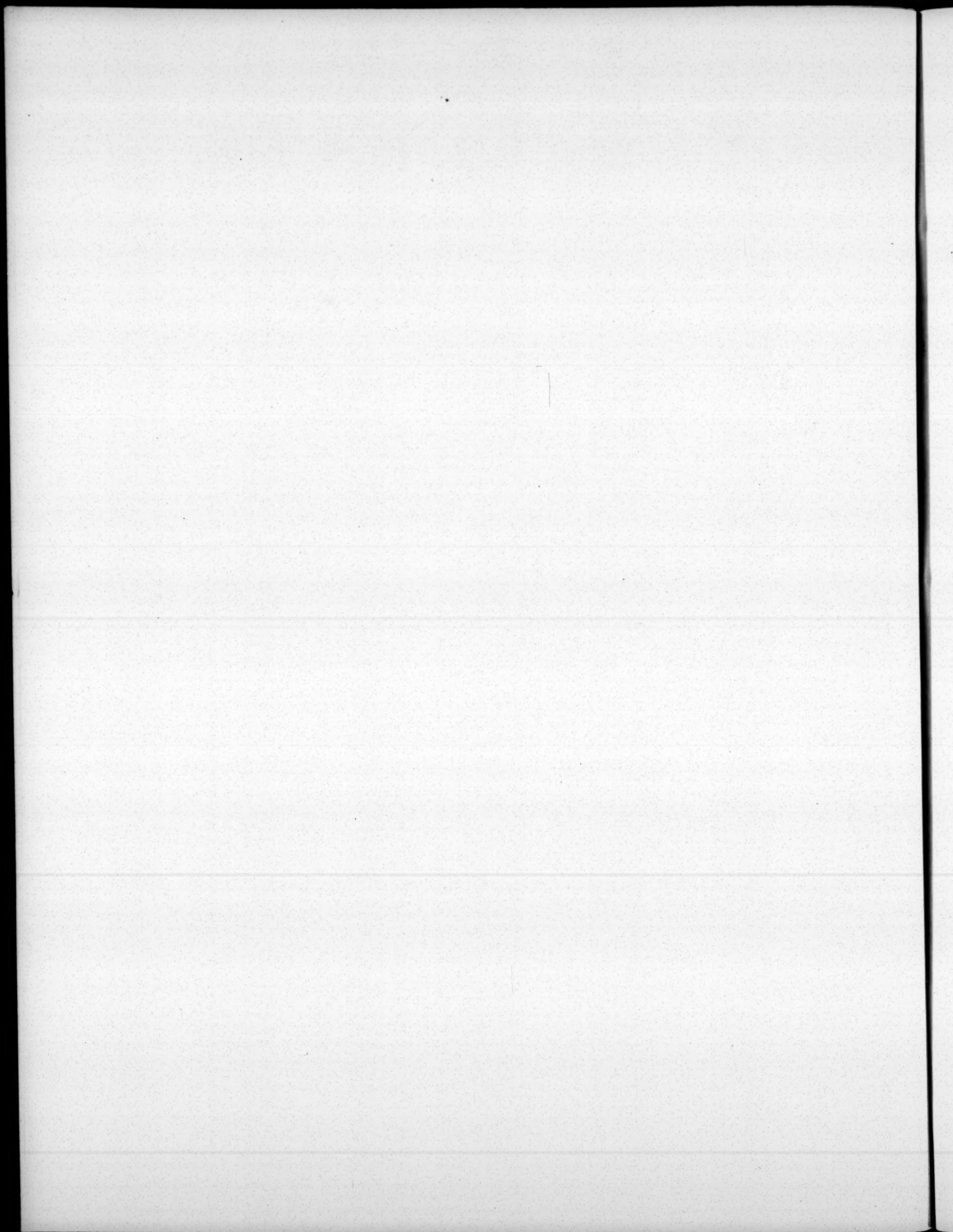
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A N D

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mote the Independency of the Priesthood. Ruin must soon overtake that Nation which is careless of its Eternal Weal; and what Part of the Body-Politic contributes more to the Preservation of Government than this honourable, tho' neglected Society? Take, then, their Case into your serious Consideration, and contrive some Method to silence those Complaints which cry aloud for Redress. I am not pleading my own Cause; for I am no Clergyman, am ally'd to but One, and that distantly; nor does the Author (had he even the most unexceptionable Pretensions to the Office) ever intend to solicit an Ordination; neither has he the least Favour to ask from the very Primate down to the meanest Curate; his Sentiments, therefore, on the present Occasion, are purely for the general Good of Mankind.

It may be conjectured, perhaps, from some satirical Strokes in the ensuing Poem, that it is meant as a Satire on the Profession; but the Reader will plainly see that the Motive is in a great measure Personal; for a bad Man, in whatever Occupation of Life, is to me an Object of the highest Contempt; and, as I have observed above, the Faults of *Particulars* can be no Blemish to the Whole. In short, should any single worthy Individual reap the least Benefit from this Publication, the Author's End will be fully obtained; and if any *One* takes the least Offence at what he may hereafter read, he is quite welcome to the *Cap*.

For the Performance itself, a discerning Reader will plainly perceive many Faults in it, tho' sketch'd in so narrow a Compass, it being the Production of impetuous Genius; evermore too impatient to correct the Sallies of precipitate Composition, and whose Time is too much immersed in various Scenes to spare an uninterrupted Leisure for laborious Application. Pleas no-way satisfactory to the Public, I grant, in excuse for Literary Faults, but they are Pleas founded on Truth; and notwithstanding some Critics expect to see little less than Perfection in the Works of others, I shall be very glad when they shall furnish Us with Instances of it in their own.

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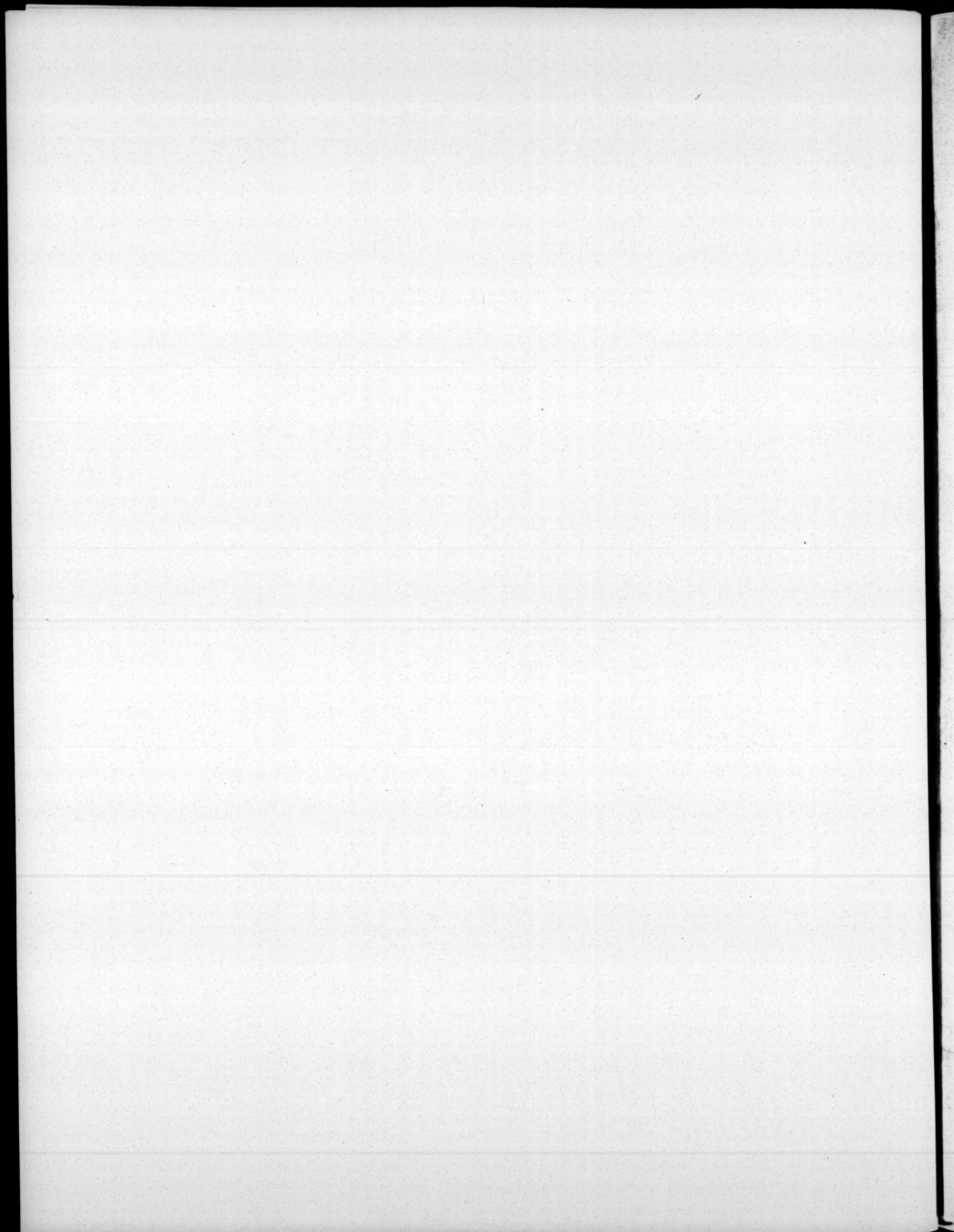


T H E

# P R E F A C E.

**C**Onsidering of what vast Importance our Clergy are to the Community, as well in a Temporal as a Spiritual Sense, it is much to be lamented to see how little they are respected as a Body of Men, and how scandalously and slenderly many of them are supported as the Ministers of God. To trace this Evil to its Source can be no pleasing Task to any true Lover of his Country, or I would here attempt it; for exposing the Dissoluteness of the impious Many, serves only to raise the Blushes of the worthy Few, which to a Man of the least refin'd Sensibility is painful and disgusting. That there is scarce a Member of any Trade or Profession but enjoys a more comfortable Subsistence than the greater Part of the Preachers of the Gospel, is a Truth too evident to be denied; and that the Clergy (abstracted of their Usefulness to the Learned World) are more deserving of Independency than the Laity, all, I presume, who have any intimate Connections with them, will readily confess. But, alas! a single Instance of Misconduct among a small Part of the sacred Order, is considered as Treason in the whole Body; as if in the very Moment when a Man commenced Priest, he was no longer Man; but that in changing his Layhood (if I may be allow'd the Expression) he had also changed his Nature. Ridiculous and Uncharitable!

Hence, a *Kidgel*, with some Men, is a sufficient Plea to traduce the whole Fraternity; and that there are a few others who are a Disgrace to the Function, sorry I am that Truth obliges me to own; but is the whole Ecclesiastical Body to be eternally censured and reflected upon, because a Few have prostituted the Institution of their Order? With as little Reason is the Integrity of the worthy *Eleven* to be reproached for the Treachery of the base *Judas*. No wonder that Religion grows every Day more contemptible, when her Ministers grow less respected; and the Fault is neither in the Church or the Clergy, but in our abandoned Profligacy and Want of a proper Degree of Discernment. You, therefore, of the Laity, ennobled with Rank, and bless'd with Fortune, it is your Duty, as it is your Interest, to defend the Reputation, and promote





THE

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ANGEL and the CURATE.

A

P O E M.

UNHAPPY Wretch ! where'er I turn

Fresh Evils rise, my Fate to mourn !

No Dungeon Slave, no Porter mean,

No Garman base, no Pimp obscene,

No Felon whom his Conscience scares,

No Minister with all his Cares,

No Debtor by a Bailiff chas'd,

No Bishop slurr'd, no Lord disgrac'd,

No Lover from his Mistress torn,

No reigning Toast o'er-look'd with Scorn,

A

No



5 ]  
No Miser robb'd of all his Wealth,  
No Debauchee disclaim'd by Health,  
No Author damn'd by Critic Fools,  
No Critic censur'd by the Schools,  
No Husband rack'd with jealous Rage,  
No Bride accurs'd with wedded Age,  
No worthy Priest at Levee Doors  
Whole Hours detain'd, while vagrant Whores  
Before him e'er Admittance have;  
(Blest Fav'rites of his Lordship's Slave!)

No huff'd *Dependent* for his Bread,  
In Manners nice, tho' coarsely fed,  
No disappointed Courtier proud,  
No BEDFORD hiss'd at by the Croud;  
In brief, no Wretch, of Wretches great,  
Or in a high, or low Estate,  
Whom Strangers shun, whom Friends decry,  
Is half so plagu'd, so curs'd as I!

Up with the Lark begin my Cares,  
Affwag'd but by my daily Prayers!  
Finish'd with God the Task we owe,  
My Labour next demands the Plough;

For



For slender Curacies like Mine,  
 Scarce furnish Bread and Cheese to dine!  
 How shou'd I then, (by Heav'n decreed)  
 Five helpless Babies daily feed?  
 Who rive my Heart for many a Want,  
 Which the stern Vicar scorns to grant;  
 A sickly Wife too, how maintain,  
 When Thirty Pounds is all my Gain?  
 These Limbs, for Labour never meant,  
 In menial Labour must be spent;  
 That Learning, which e'en Foes commend,  
 Ne'er purchas'd yet one zealous Friend!  
 Those Sermons too by Bishops prais'd,  
 One solid Guinea have not rais'd!  
 Nor aught avails the pleasing Name  
 Of worthy Curate, free from Blame,  
 When servile Toil my Genius cramps,  
 And Penury my Spirits damps;  
 When haughty Rectors spurn my Tears,  
 And leave me to my Plough and Pray'rs!

Unus'd to rustic Manners mean,  
 The fairy'd Tale, the Jest obscene,

The

The vulgar Scandal fram'd for Sport,  
 (Less vile than what is heard at Court)  
 The Converse rude of Booby Wit,  
 While Dulness roars with Laughter split;  
 Unus'd to such Amusements low,  
 I drop a Tear, and urge the Plough.

Burns now the Sun with torrid Heat,  
 And from my Temples pours the Sweat;  
 Full on my Head he darts his Rays,  
 Gairish with his Creator's Praise!  
 With *Leo's* Pow'r he rules the Skies;  
 E'en *Norway's* Frost before him flies!  
 While Hinds laborious panting groan,  
 Oppress'd with Hardships like my own.  
 Along the sloping Field I toil,  
 Without a Drudge to ease the while;  
 No Drink but what yon Rill bestows,  
 No Friend to soothe or chear my Woes,  
 No neighb'ring Grove extends its Shade,  
 For Converse or for Shelter made,  
 But various Ills furround my Life,  
 With Cares at Home, Abroad with Strife;

For



For hark !---From yon deriding Croud,  
 Incessant thronging *Bath's* gay Road,  
 Provoking Coxcombs (halting) prate,  
 Infult my Languors, mock my Fate,  
 Treat my Distress with Problems pert,  
 And smother the Parson in his Shirt.

Earn'd hard my Bread, homeward I bend,  
 Where *Want* expects its only Friend;  
 Forth run my Babes to meet their Sire,  
 Who welcome not, but Bread require !  
 Around me each his Hunger tells  
 In lisping Phrase, and doleful Yells.  
 See too in Garb of various Hue,  
 Black, Yellow, Scarlet, Green, and Blue,  
 My sun-burnt Heir in Rags appears;  
 Enough to melt a Fiend in Tears !  
 Unconscious of their antient Line,  
 (By Wealth no longer made divine)  
 To Passengers my Children pray,  
 Who Curses give, and hoot away.  
 A sickly Wife next greets my Eyes,  
 And shocks my Soul with plaintive Cries,

Disease her Limbs assiduous racks,  
 With Gout's severe, and sharp Attacks;  
 Consumption too works on apace,  
 With Famine staring in her Face.

Within my Cot, O Death to think!  
 The Cupboard's bare, and stale my Drink!  
 Coarse Prog at best, with nauseous Beer,  
 Is all my Feast, is all my Fare!  
 But oh! what Furniture presents  
 My Stranger Guests!-----Read the Contents-----  
 Five Chairs my Parlour small adorn,  
 Of Farmer *Carpenter* the Scorn;  
 Lo, here a Table tott'ring stands,  
 A Basin there to wash our Hands;  
 Three earthen Mugs, yet neither whole,  
 Yon Window grace; and eke a Bowl,  
 Of Value once, when WILLIAM'S Sword  
 Rebellion crush'd, and Peace restor'd.  
 That Corner boasts a Hamper's Care,  
 On which is plac'd, with drooping Air,  
 An old Deal Box without a Lock,  
 That keeps my Gown, and *Sunday* Frock;

Hard



Hard-by an oaken Desk appears,  
 A very Rarity in Years !  
 Whose under Cavities contain  
 Coarse Woollen Stuffs, and Linen plain ;  
 Above in mingled Fragments lie  
 Briefs, Sermons, Books, and Poetry.  
 A neighb'ring Corner Dishes grace,  
 With one small Glass to view my Face,  
 While social *Robins* round me fly,  
 And not a Print to catch the Eye.  
 Each other Room with this agrees,  
 Fill'd most with Rags, Joint-Stools, and Fleas !  
 O say, ye Priests, of high Degree,  
 Is this fit Furniture for Me ?

What, 'tho' Three Hundred Pounds a Year  
 This Parish gives our Rector clear ;  
 What tho' Two wealthy Livings more  
 His Name induct, to swell his Store,  
 Yet I in Penury obscure,  
 An ignominious Life endure,  
 While in *Eclat* he shines in Town,  
 And thrives on Labours not his own.

To crave Addition to my Hire,  
 Provokes Abuse, and kindles Ire.  
 ' O Slave (he cries) thou Caitiff mean,  
 ' Why Fifty clear contents a Dean!  
 ' Take heed, and thy Behaviour mend,  
 ' Nor risque the Favours of thy Friend;  
 ' A Dearth of Clergy ne'er was known,  
 ' Witnefs the Country o'er and Town.  
 ' How durst thou then tell Me thy Wants?  
 ' What Bishop now a Living grants?  
 ' Beggars themselves, to Court they fly,  
 ' The Court shares Snacks-----or Prelates lye-----  
 ' On that damn'd Subject then, no more;  
 ' Religion's cheap-----and There's the Door."

Too much of Truth herein he speaks;  
 Our Number still our Grievance makes.  
 But thou vile Priest, dar'd I proclaim  
 Thy impious Life, thy worthless Fame,  
 A Scandal on the Cloth 'twou'd throw;  
 Already scorn'd by ev'ry Foe.  
 But well I see the Cause most base,  
 (Of thy Profession the Disgrace)

Why

99-69/1



Why Gifts are hateful in thine Eyes,  
 In spite of Blood-Maternal Ties;  
 Routs, Houses, Equipage, and Play,  
 Defraud a needy Pastor's Pay!  
 Luxurious Feasts, and Servants too  
 Must be maintain'd; tho' Curates rue  
 The sinful Follies of the Times,  
 And curse their Vicar's modish Crimes.

O shameful Laws! not Christian sure,  
 To glut the Rich, and starve the Poor!  
 Which still befriended the lucky Few,  
 And give to Int'rest, Merit's Due.  
 Religion is with Him a Plea;  
 For all he aims at-----is a SEE.  
 And shall the Mitre prove *his* Lot,  
 Who hath both Creed and God forgot?  
 Reclaim him first, ye Pow'rs above,  
 And shew your Church a Father's Love.  
 Scarce One the Golden Rule observes,  
 And who the Primate's Charge deserves?  
 HERRINGS are rare; and 'tis the Mode,  
 To worship *Mammon* more than God;

D

While

While \*\*\*\* confirms this Satire true,  
 Sans-Livings make Sans-Priesthood too.

*Pluralities!* the very Name  
 Is Heathen Root, and big with Shame;  
 In *Britain* where the Gospel shines,  
 Shou'd *Plutus*' Priests starve God's Divines?  
 Ye Rulers of the sacred Charge,  
 The drudging Curate's Pay enlarge,  
 Or vile Pluralities renounce,  
 Soft Cushions for each lazy Dunce.  
 And, You, who Canon Laws compose,  
 To Satan's Empire watchful Foes,  
 Loath'd *Residence* with strict Command,  
 Enjoin each Rector thro' the Land;  
 Then Faith will thrive, and Virtue smile,  
 Best Ornaments that grace our Isle.

God is my Witness, I delight  
 In Parish Duties Day or Night;  
 Fond to compose a Village Strife,  
 Instruct their Sons, and polish Life;  
 A little Flock, but good in Kind,  
 More rude in Breeding than in Mind;

Too



Too low to feel Ambition's Flame,  
 Too innocent to know a Shame;  
 Beneath Deceit, above a Lie,  
 For Scorn too mean, for Fraud too high.  
 Me, Brother some; some, Father call;  
 A gen'rous Priest may profit all.  
 E'en Lawyer's Fees I often save,  
 And Doctor's Bills they seldom have;  
 Deeply Faith's Tenets I imbibe,  
 And Virtue urge to all the Tribe;  
 While *Age* commends my pious Zeal,  
 And *Youth* confirms the Bliss I feel,  
 The Shadow-Bliss, in spite of Cares  
 Domestic, and *Ejectment's* Fears.

No Peasant who implores my Aid,  
 In vain implores; altho' unpaid  
 The Curate goes; no Pay he asks!  
 The Task of Love's the best of Tasks.  
 When yon lone Bell my Pray'rs requires,  
 Faith fills my Soul with hallow'd Fires;  
 Pleas'd I ascend the Desk divine,  
 While Kings best Joys might envy Mine.

Distinct

Distinct I pray with earnest Zeal,  
 Enforcing what myself do feel;  
 With Emphasis discreetly plain,  
 Pronounce each wise, each sacred Strain;  
 While on Devotion's Wings I soar,  
 And view the Kingdom I adore;  
 Taste the pure Bliss to Angels known,  
 And Heav'n that Instant make my own.

When too before an Audience fit,  
 To Few in Preaching I'll submit;  
 For know, an *Earl*, once deign'd to praise,  
 Which did my Hopes a little raise;  
 But ne'er thought since of *one* Preferment,  
 In spite of all his kind Discernment.

A Wit too heard this Man of God,  
 And swore he rivall'd even *Dodd*†,  
 Affur'd some Bishops of the Truth,  
 (For what won't Wit when join'd with Youth!)  
 The Bishops star'd like worthy Lords,  
 But Truth is deaf at *London* Boards.



† The Rev. *Mr. William Dodd*, Chaplain to the *Magdalen* Hospital.

From

102



From HOPE proceeds what Joy I know,  
 Sole *Panacean* Balm of Woe!  
 Pray'r too her Consolation gives,  
 While Conscious Self unblemish'd lives.  
 But when vile servile Tasks demand  
 My precious Life, and constant Hand,  
 Which were for nobler Ends design'd,  
 Than ploughing with the Horse and Hind;  
 When I behold my ragged Boys,  
 Co-heirs with Kings, without their Joys;  
 When I survey my homely Cot,  
 Scarce meriting the basest Sot;  
 When I must herd with stupid Drones,  
 Or hear a Wife's expiring Groans;  
 While on a Sofa stretch'd at Ease  
 A *Rector* proud, whom None can please;  
 Whole Years away in Dulness dreams,  
 Or spends his Life in festive Schemes;  
 Who, blind to all my Wants and Cares,  
 And deaf to my Complaints and Pray'rs,  
 Rejects my Suits with flouting Rage,  
 And frowns Dismission to his Page:  
 When this I see, when this I bear,  
 And from a Wretch I scorn to fear,  
 Who, who can feel the galling Chain,  
 Nor spurn Existence with Disdain?

'Tis Cowardice to bear my Fate  
 Without Resentment, or my Hate;  
 I cannot-----will not-----bear it more-----  
 God's greatest Curse is to be Poor.  
 Hence then base Cares, ill-fit ye Me,  
 Tho' rank'd in Life of low Degree;  
 Heav'n ne'er design'd me for a Slave,  
 Or fawning Priest, or pimping Knave;  
 Hence then, and haughty Vicars tell,  
 One scorns to live, who can't live well.

Thus rav'd our Curate at his Lot,  
 His Patience lost, his Hope forgot!  
 When, quick as Light, an Angel Form  
 Before him stood, and gravely warm  
 These Words pronounc'd.-----Stay, Madman! stay,  
 Thy Frenzy wou'd thy Virtue slay.  
 Be dumb----and listen to my Voice,  
 Nor longer murmur, but rejoice.

Fam'd for Distress, unmatch'd in Woes,  
 By Friends deny'd, traduc'd by Foes,  
 Compell'd the Country round to roam,  
 A Labourer without a Home;  
 In Garb most mean, in Toil a Slave,  
 Obscure in Birth, yet Great to save,

Thy



Thy Master's Life afflictive shines;  
Example pure for all Divines.

Say, Murmurer! what mighty Pain  
Beyond thy Lord's, dost thou sustain?  
Lack e'er thy Babes a wholesome Meal?  
Flows Comfort not from yon rich Vale?  
What, tho' no Dainties deck thy Board,  
Do not these Trees their Fruits afford?  
Thy Garden hath its Sallads too,  
With Vegetables not a few.  
About thy Barn, in Flocks convene  
The feather'd Race, a chearful Scene!  
Smiles not thy Glebe with Wheaten Grain?  
And whose that Cow on yonder Plain?  
Before thy Door, do not these Lambs  
Thee Master call? and all their Dams?  
Content thy Creatures round thee live;  
Thou only must lament and grieve.  
To drudge in Occupations mean,  
Thou treat'st with arrogant Disdain:  
Know, servile Toils despis'd by You,  
Worth sanctifies, and credits too;  
As Vice's highest Posts debase,  
So Virtue does the lowest grace.

Scorn'd thy Redeemer once his Trade?  
Earn'd not he thence his daily Bread?

Thy

Thy Pride, thy Pride augments thy Cares,  
 Enflames with Rage, and fills with Fears;  
 Weigh well those Comforts now possess'd,  
 Than Thousands art not thou more bless'd?  
 Why then complain of Woes severe?  
 A real Want is real Care!  
 And tho' no Plenty fills thy Dome,  
 Content shou'd jubilate thy Home.

Certain it is, Disease affails  
 Thy much-lov'd Wife with various Ails;  
 But art not Thou from Sickness free?  
 And droops a Child to shock e'en Thee?  
 'Tis known thou hast a gentle Mind,  
 In Manners pure, in Sense refin'd;  
 Heroic Virtues store thy Heart,  
 Adorn thy Life, and Love impart.  
 Yet, with these Qualities posses't,  
 That Demon *Pride* corrodes thy Breast;  
 World-working Pride! from Folly sprung,  
 The hateful Vice of Old and Young.  
 Man's Happiness in Three Things lies,  
 (Thus rightly Preach the Good and Wise)  
 Regard not then nor Pomp nor Wealth,  
 The Three are, FREEDOM, GRACE, and HEALTH;  
 And These are Thine.-----Cease then to mourn,  
 Nor heed the World with all its Scorn.

If

E-274/1



If God approves, thou art most blest ;  
 Misfortune is of Worth the Test.  
 The Wretch from ev'ry Evil free,  
 Is wretched in the worst Degree !  
 While Christ with Trials daily griev'd,  
 Proud *Caiphas* in Splendor liv'd.  
 Abates not that thy Boyish Tears ?  
 For Universal were his Cares !  
 Seeks Man a Recompense below,  
 For Works which from his Virtue flow ?  
 Egregious Dunce ! Doth sweet Reward  
 For Service just, and Labours hard,  
 The Servant crown while yet 'tis Day ?  
 Till done his Task, receives he Pay ?  
 Whom God afflicteth, Him loves God ;  
 And wilt thou deprecate the Rod ?  
 Vile Bastardism dost thou prefer ?  
 Nor heed'st what Glory can confer ?  
 From the same Hand still welcome Woe,  
 Which Food and Raiment doth bestow.

Oppression from thy Reclor's Hate,  
 Repays his Father's hapless Fate,  
 Who groan'd with many a cruel Smart,  
 Beneath thy Grandfire's tyrant Heart ;  
 Like thine, unpity'd, were his Woes,  
 Nor ought of this thy Vicar knows ;

F

But



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F

But

But herein He (To speak with Awe)  
 Fulfills an equitable Law.  
 Mark old *Fornicor's* deep Distress,  
 (And thy Creator's Justice blefs)  
 Who in his darling Daughter sees  
 Permissive Ills by wise Decrees.  
*Fornicor* once, perfidious Knave!  
 Seduc'd the Maid he swore to save;  
 A dying Parent heard the Vow,  
 And smil'd at Death's approaching Blow.  
 Content, his Friend, had heard his Pray'r,  
 And sunk to Rest without a Care!  
 But Ruin soon o'ertook the Maid,  
 To vile *Fornicor's* Lures betray'd,  
 Regardless of her tender Youth,  
 And Friendship's violated Truth.  
 Her Foundling Son, a Footman late,  
 (Unconscious of his Mother's State)  
 Enjoys *Fornicor's* Daughter's Charms,  
 And riots in her blooming Arms.  
 See *Vice* e'en here its Wages have;  
 Sure Pledge of worse beyond the Grave!  
 Henceforth thy Maker's Ways revere,  
 Nor let Affliction prove thy Snare;  
 But mind thy Pray'rs, and speed thy Plough,  
 And leave to God thy Fate below.

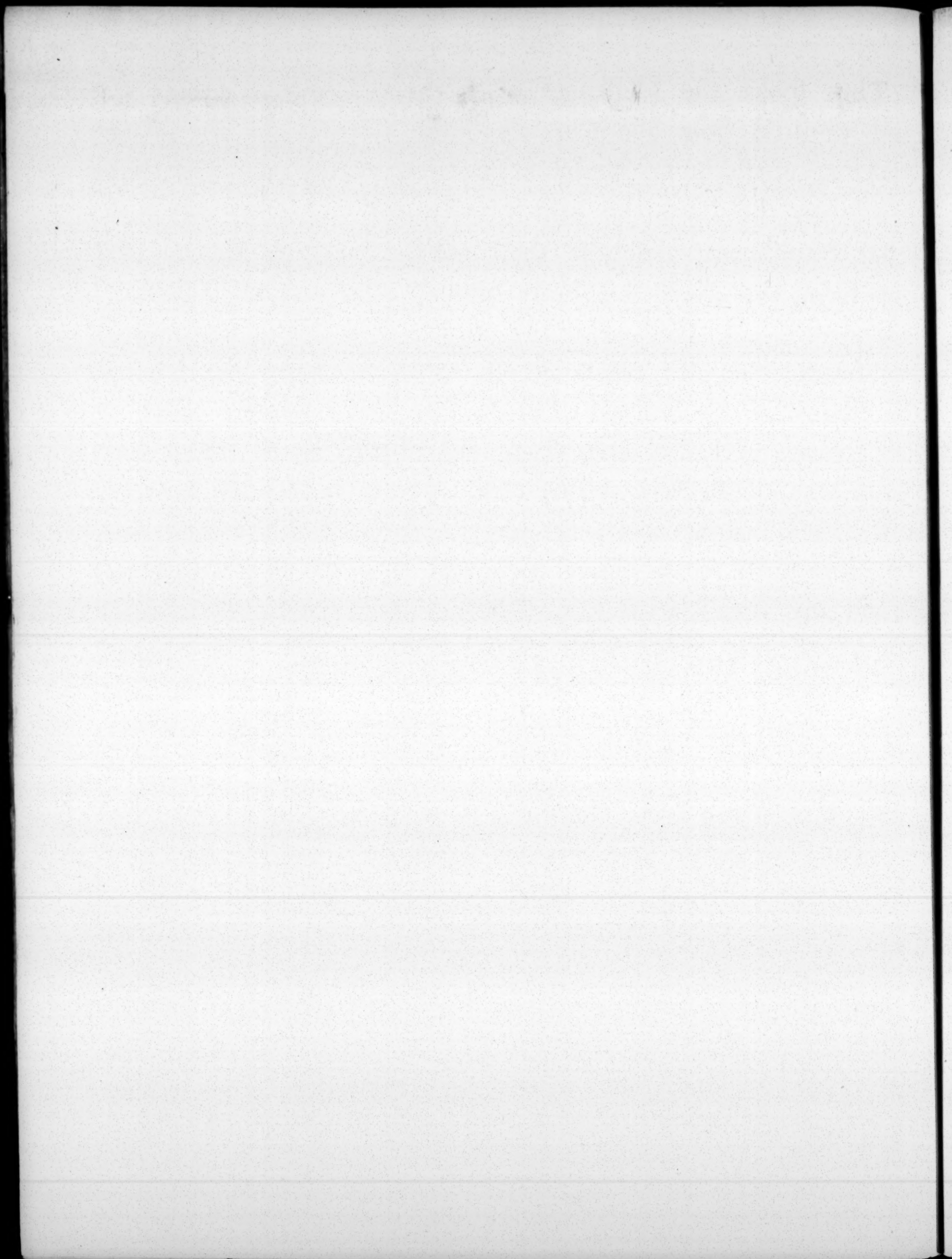
Thus



Thus spoke the Messenger of Light,  
 And vanish'd from the Curate's Sight.  
 Amaz'd, abash'd, O Wretch! he cries,  
 (While on the Earth he bent his Eyes)  
 What Punishment deserv'st thou not?  
 Out from thy Book my Folly blot,  
 Offended God! Nor write my Soul  
 On frantic Suicides black Scroll.  
 All Mercy is, O Father! Thine;  
 But Shame, Rebuke, and Guilt are Mine!  
 Henceforth, Distress I will revere,  
 And Ills I cannot conquer, bear.  
 No more shall Satan tempt with Ire,  
 Or fill my Breast with vain desire,  
 Nor *Want* view more with partial Eyes,  
 But honour Stripes that make us wise.

Too much hath Folly touch'd my Brain,  
 Caught from the Fools I shou'd disdain;  
 Like other Murm'ers, harping still  
 On *that* old Grief, and *this* new Ill!  
 While ev'ry Blessing is forgot,  
 Tho' Blessings croud beyond our Lot.  
 And when its Trials Heav'n ordains,  
 O how we number all our Pains!  
 And with an Emphasis sublime,  
 Heap Woe on Woe, and Crime on Crime.

Ye





Ye happy Sons! like Me in Care,  
 (For Care's a Blessing, when Despair  
 Pales not her Cheek, nor clouds her Brow,  
 But smiles Resignment thro' her Woe)  
 Ye happy Sons! for Virtue's sake,  
 From My Transgression, Warning take;  
 Thirst not for Wealth, Religion's Bane,  
 Nor Honour seek in Honour vain;  
 A scorning World repay with Scorn,  
 And Penury! with Worth adorn.  
 Nor hang the Head with Shame oppress'd,  
 Because in Life thou art distress'd;  
 But still on God obedient wait,  
 And leave to Him thy Cares and State;  
 For e'er rever'd shou'd be His Will,  
 Who can both Soul and Body kill.

**F I N I S.**